



# The Raven & The Rock

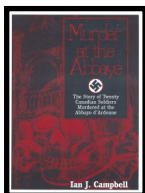
## The Glens' Association Newsletter—February 2022

### A STORY ABOUT PERSERVERANCE

The 1979 annual training plan for Lieutenant Colonel Robert Fischer's (later Lieutenant General) 4 Service Battalion, stationed in Lahr, Germany, included an officers training field trip to study the 1944 battlefields of Normandy. Fortunately, they became lost. Their 40-passenger bus stopped along side what turned out to be the Abbaye d'Ardennes. They drove into the courtyard and asked permission to look around. They had the great fortune of meeting Madame Vico and her son Jacques. For anyone who was part of a 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Glens Tour, meeting the Vicos was special.



A year later, 4 Service Battalion received a new Deputy Commanding Officer, Major Ian Campbell (later Colonel). He was told of the visit to the Abbaye. The visitors of the Abbaye complained about the lack of information about what had happened at the Abbaye in June 1944. Major Campbell set out to correct this by determining who was killed in the Abbaye garden, how they came to be captured, and what happened at the Abbaye. He visited the Abbaye the next summer and met with the Vico family. His first goal was to develop a record of the murders. His second goal was to have a memorial plaque installed in the garden. Through perseverance, he accomplished both goals.



Developing the record eventually led to his book "Murder at the Abbaye". If we are fortunate enough to have a future Glens Tour, this book should be pre-tour reading. This will help explain why in 2019 the citizens of Villons-les-Buissons, Saint-Contest, and Authie honoured members of the 9<sup>th</sup> Canadian Infantry Brigade by constructing a new roundabout dedicated to the men who helped liberate their area of Normandy in 1944.



Colonel Campbell states in his book that the design of the memorial plaque was fairly straightforward, but its production and installation were more challenging. The monument was built from historic stones found in the Abbaye grounds. Its construction was completed by two highly qualified local craftsmen. A company in Vancouver BC was found for the memorial plaque. Unfortunately, the actual cost of the plaque was five times the original estimate. A major fundraiser was required. With Colonel Campbell's perseverance, the memorial plaque became a reality. On the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day in 1984, an unveiling ceremony was held to honour the 20 soldiers murdered at the Abbaye.

When our Unit was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Sandy Robertson, ceremonies were held in the Cornwall Armoury to honour the two Glens murdered at the Abbaye on June 17, 1944. The Junior Ranks Mess was dedicated as the Lance Corporal George Pollard Mess and a Lieutenant Fred Williams Memorial Wall was dedicated in the Officers' Mess. Colonel Ian Campbell participated in the ceremonies.



On the night of June 7 / 8, 1944, 18 Canadian soldiers were murdered in this garden while being held here as prisoners of war. Two more prisoners died here or nearby on June 17. They are dead but not forgotten.

*From the plaque*

Maybe at our next Reunion, Greg Pollard will set up his memorial display for his uncle Lance Corporal George Pollard.

**Up The Glens!**

**Glens' Association Website—<http://www.glensassociation.ca>**